

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Previously amended) A motorcycle saddlebag comprising:
a body having an inner surface defining a cavity;
a lid having an inner surface and movable between an open position in which said lid does not fully cover said cavity and a closed position in which said inner surface of said lid defines an upper boundary of said cavity and in which said lid fully covers said cavity; and
a hinge assembly interconnecting said body to said lid, said hinge assembly completely enclosed within said cavity when said lid is in said closed position and including a first mounting member mounted to said inner surface of said body, a second mounting member mounted to said inner surface of said lid, and a coupling assembly pivotally coupling said first and second mounting members to each other, wherein said lid and body engage each other in a joining perimeter, and wherein said coupling assembly guides said lid through substantially vertical translatable motion at least until said lid substantially entirely disengages said body, and then pivots said lid about a substantially horizontal axis of rotation.

2. (Original) The saddlebag of claim 1, wherein said first mounting member includes a first pair of mounting bosses and a first pin supported by said first pair of mounting bosses, wherein said first mounting member also includes a second pair of mounting bosses and a second pin supported by said second pair of mounting bosses, wherein said first and second pins are substantially parallel and non-collinear with respect to each other, and wherein said second mounting member is interconnected with and pivotal about both of said first and second pins.

3. (Original) The saddlebag of claim 2, wherein said coupling assembly includes first and second coupling members, said first coupling member being pivotally coupled between said first pin and said second mounting member, and said second coupling member being pivotally coupled between said second pin and said second mounting member.

4. (Original) The saddlebag of claim 3, wherein said first and second coupling members are substantially identical to each other.

5. (Original) The saddlebag of claim 3, wherein said second mounting member includes third and fourth pairs of mounting bosses, and third and fourth pins supported by said third and fourth pairs of mounting bosses, respectively, said third and fourth pins being substantially parallel and non-collinear with respect to each other as well as with respect to said first and second pins, wherein said first coupling member is pivotally coupled between said first pin and said third pin, and said second coupling member is pivotally coupled between said second pin and said fourth pin.

6. (Original) The saddlebag of claim 5, wherein said first and second pins are spaced from each other a first distance and wherein said third and fourth pins are spaced from each other a second distance different from said first distance.

7. (Cancelled)

8. (Original) The saddlebag of claim 1, wherein said lid and body each include a lip, said lips of said lid and body engaging each other in a joining perimeter when said lid is in said closed position, and wherein said coupling assembly includes a means for first lifting said lid lip substantially entirely off of said body lip and then pivoting said lid with respect to said body as said lid is moved toward said open position.

9. (Original) The saddlebag of claim 1, wherein said coupling assembly includes a pivot axis about which said lid is pivotal with respect to said body, and wherein said coupling assembly is configured to move said pivot axis with respect to said body as said lid is opened and closed.

10. (Previously amended) The saddlebag of claim 9, wherein said pivot axis is moved closer to said hinge assembly as said lid is moved toward said open position, such that the motion of said lid with respect to said body transitions from substantially translational motion to substantially rotational motion.

11-12. (Cancelled)

13. (Currently amended) A motorcycle saddlebag comprising:
an injection-molded body defining a cavity, said body having a body lip formed integrally with said body and defining a mouth of said cavity;
a gasket positioned on said body lip; and
a lid having a lid lip, said lid being movably mounted to said body to open and close said saddlebag, said gasket being sandwiched between said lid lip and said body lip when said lid is in a closed position;

wherein said lid lip is manufactured separately from the rest of said lid, said lid lip including an undercut, said lid including a lid edge and at least one internal gusset, wherein said lid lip undercut is positioned on said lid edge ~~lid lip edge~~ and said lid lip is further in contact with said gusset such that said gusset reduces shear stress on said lid lip, said lid lip being glued to said lid.

14. (Cancelled)

15. (Previously amended) The saddlebag of claim 13, further comprising a hinge coupling said lid to said body, wherein said hinge is configured to move said lid in a substantially translational manner away from said body during opening of said saddlebag such that substantially all portions of said lid lip substantially entirely and simultaneously disengage said gasket, said hinge further configured to pivot said lid with respect to said body once said gasket has been substantially entirely disengaged.

16. (Original) The saddlebag of claim 13, further comprising a hinge coupling said lid to said body, said hinge having a pivot axis and a mechanism for moving said pivot axis during opening and closing of said lid such that substantially all portions of said lid lip substantially entirely and simultaneously disengage said gasket during opening of said lid, and substantially entirely and simultaneously engage said gasket during closing of said lid.

17-18. (Cancelled)

19. (Previously amended) A motorcycle saddlebag comprising:
a lid;
a body;
a hinge assembly coupling said lid and body to facilitate moving said lid between an open position and a closed position with respect to said body;
a locking assembly selectively locking said lid in said closed position, said locking assembly including a latch mounted to said lid, a push button slidably mounted to said body, and a hook pivotally mounted to said push button by a pin, wherein depressing said push button causes said hook to pivot about said pin; and
a cam mechanism rotatably coupled to said body, wherein said cam mechanism engages said latch when said lid is in said closed position, wherein depression of said push button causes said hook to engage said cam mechanism and wherein engagement of said cam mechanism by said hook causes said cam mechanism to rotate thereby disengaging said latch and allowing said lid to be moved toward said opened position.

20-22. (Cancelled)

23. (Previously amended) A method for operating a motorcycle saddlebag having a lid and a body, the method comprising:
mounting a push button latching mechanism to one of the lid and body;
biasing the lid toward a fully open position with a biasing member;
interconnecting the lid to the body with the latching mechanism when the lid is closed;
resisting the biasing force of the biasing member with the latching mechanism;
releasing the latching mechanism in response to actuation of the push button; and
opening the lid under the influence of the biasing member after the latching mechanism is released, wherein opening the lid includes moving the lid in a substantially vertical translational manner with respect to the body to a partially open position, and then moving the lid in a substantially rotational manner with respect to the body to the fully open position.

24. (Currently amended) A method of opening a motorcycle saddlebag having a lid, a body, and a hinge assembly coupled between the lid and the body, the hinge assembly defining an axis about which the lid is movable with respect to the body, the axis being movable between a first position further from the body and a second position closer to the body, the method comprising:

with the axis at the first position, opening the lid to a partially open position wherein the lid moves substantially vertically with respect to the body;

while the lid is moving toward the partially open position, moving the axis from the first position toward the second position; and

while the axis is moving toward the second position, opening the lid to a fully open position by pivoting the lid with respect to the body,

wherein the saddlebag further includes a biasing member between the lid and the body, and wherein the method further comprises biasing the lid toward the partially and fully open positions with the biasing member, and

wherein the saddlebag further includes a latching mechanism between the lid and the body, the latching mechanism operable to maintain the lid in a closed position by resisting a biasing force generated by the biasing mechanism, and wherein the method further comprises releasing the latching mechanism to open the lid.

25-26. (Cancelled)

27. (Currently amended) The method ~~of claim 26~~ of claim 24, wherein the latching mechanism includes a push button, and wherein releasing the latching mechanism includes depressing the push button.

28. (Previously added) The method of claim 24, wherein the hinge assembly includes first and second mounting members and first and second coupling members interconnected to define a four bar linkage, and wherein moving the axis from the first position to the second position results from the movement of the first and second mounting members and first and second coupling members.

29. (Previously amended) A motorcycle saddlebag comprising:

a body having an inner surface defining a cavity;

a lid having an inner surface and movable between an open position in which said lid does not fully cover said cavity and a closed position in which said inner surface of said lid defines an upper boundary of said cavity and in which said lid fully covers said cavity; and

a hinge assembly interconnecting said body to said lid, said hinge assembly including a first mounting member mounted to said inner surface of said body, a second mounting member mounted to said inner surface of said lid, and a coupling assembly pivotally coupling said first and second mounting members to each other, wherein said coupling assembly defines a pivot axis about which said lid is pivotal with respect to said body, and wherein said coupling assembly is configured to move said pivot axis with respect to said body as said lid is opened and closed, wherein said pivot axis is moved closer to said hinge assembly as said lid is moved toward said open position, such that the motion of said lid with respect to said body transitions from substantially translational motion to substantially rotational motion.

30. (Previously added) The motorcycle saddlebag of claim 29, wherein said hinge assembly is completely enclosed within said cavity when said lid is in said closed position.

31-32. (Cancelled)

33. (Previously added) A motorcycle saddlebag comprising:
a body having an inner surface defining a cavity;
a lid having an inner surface and movable between an open position in which said lid does not fully cover said cavity and a closed position in which said inner surface of said lid defines an upper boundary of said cavity and in which said lid fully covers said cavity; and
a hinge assembly interconnecting said body to said lid, said hinge assembly completely enclosed within said cavity when said lid is in said closed position and including a first mounting member mounted to said inner surface of said body, a second mounting member mounted to said inner surface of said lid, and a coupling assembly pivotally coupling said first and second mounting members to each other, wherein said coupling assembly includes a pivot axis about which said lid is pivotal with respect to said body, and wherein said coupling assembly is configured to move said pivot axis with respect to said body as said lid is opened and closed.

34. (Previously added) The motorcycle saddlebag of claim 33, wherein said pivot axis is moved closer to said hinge assembly as said lid is moved toward said open position, such that the motion of said lid with respect to said body transitions from substantially translational motion to substantially rotational motion.
